

# The Athenian Mercury.

Monday, May 31. 1697.

Quest. 1. **W** Herefore do such as are made afraid look Pale and Wan?

*Ans.* Because, Nature doth withdraw the Blood from the Exterior, unto the more Noble and Inward Parts of the Body; even as such, who have lost the Power and Command of the Field, or Campaign, retreat to their Garrisons and Castles, the best fenced and fortified: For 'tis the Blood that causeth that Vermeile and Blushing Colour in the face, which being withdrawn Paleness ensues.

Quest. 2. *Why do we sweat in the Face (more than any other part of the Body,) altho it be kept uncovered?*

*Ans.* Because it is more moist, as its Haryness doth demonstrate; and that the Brain, which is very moist being inclosed within the Head, dischargeth it self on all sides, by Divers Passages; Add to this, that 'tis the Nature of Humidity to descend; As it is there more evident and apparent, than in the lower parts of the Body.

Quest. 3. *Why is it, that grafted Trees bear better Fruit than Savage ones: And those that are twice, are better than such who have been but once grafted?*

*Ans.* Because, Nature perceiving some defect, doth endeavour to repair it by a better and more Ample Nourishment: So that the Tree being Incised, or Cut for to be grafted, it sends as much Alliment as is necessary, and of the best to the part Incised; By which it is so much the more fortified and fitted to produce better Fruits.

Quest. 4. *Why do Flowers flourish and open in the Morning, and are Contracted and shut at Night?*

*Ans.* 'Tis, because that the Nature of Heat is to dilate and open; And the Nature of Cold to contract and shut, so that the Sun by its heat makes them to open and flourish. And the Sun being set, they are Contracted and shut, by the Cold of the following Night.

Quest. 5. *Why is Blood alone of all humours Red?*

*Ans.* Because it hath its Colour from the Liver, that makes it so.

Quest. 6. *Why doth Man alone, of all other Animals, bleed by the Nose, being neither hurt nor beaten?*

*Ans.* Because that he hath more Brains than other Creatures, according to the proportion of his Body, by means whereof more moisture doth proceed, insomuch, that the Veins are forced (being filled with so much Excre-

ments, which mingling with the Blood) to discharge that which is most subtil by the Nostrils, near to which the Veins are confined to the Brain. For as Aristotle saith, that Blood which is avoided by the Nostrils, being Corrupted by the mixture of other Excrements, renders it self more subtil then if it were intire. And as it is more subtil and attenuated, it runs out therefore more easily, being thrust by that which is more gross and thick. The true cause then is, that the more soft and supple bodies being pressed and thrust back, by such Bodys as are more hard and firm, they do yeild not at their Level, but in raising and lifting up. For Example; If with our Foot we strike a heap of mud, it will rise up and Accumilate it self on high, rather then recoil. But you'll say, this proceeds from its Humidities, in Answer to which (we say) do as much unto a heap of Sand, and the same thing will happen; So then water descending from its Source from a High and Eminent place, the Flux of the hindmost Water, doth Incessantly thrust forward that part which is before, which is the cause that finding resistance and hindrance in its Course, and that which is pretended being not able to penetrate, or make the Bodys that it meets to yeild unto it, it is forced by that which follows it to Raise and Mount, unless there be some means left for it, to expand and extend it self. Forasmuch, as it being a Liquid Body, extension and diffusion are Natural unto it, and its descent also because of its heaviness, and its ascent because of its Violence, being contrary unto it; it extends and diffuses it self at large, and sooner and more easily descends, then it doth surmount the hindrances that it meets withal in its Course. But suppose, that water be Inclosed (as in Pipes of Lead) that it cannot diffuse it self: Nevertheless, we ought not to limit its ascent to the height of the place of its Source: But this depends on the force, impulsion, and weight of the Body that thrusts from behind, and of that which resisteth from before. For if the Impulsion, and weight of a Body pressed from behind, is more feeble than the resistance of a body which is before, the water will not mount so high, as if the Impulsion and weight of the Body, pressing from behind did surmount, (and if we may so say) force that which resisteth from before. This may be observ'd by experience in the Pipes of Fountains, in which they make the water to rise as high as they please, by the Artifice of Weights. But enough of this: We have been a little the longer on this Question, that we might destroy the Popu-



Popular Error proposed in it, and by the way to establish the true Cause.

Quest. 7. *How comes it to pass, that casting from on high (in a perpendicular line, and right line) a Beam, or other piece of wood equally thick, into the water, the lower end thereof that first enters the water, will sooner come up again upon the water, before the higher end shall come to the bottom?*

Ans. 'Tis certain, that wood is a Body which contains inclosed in it much Air: The Nature of which is, to be above the water, by reason whereof being thrust by violence under the water, it arises above it by its Nature, in less time then the violence (which is Accidentary to it) hath made it to sink.

Quest. 8. *Wherefore is it, that a piece of wood thrown from high to low into the Water, together with a piece of Lead, Stone, or any other hard and solid body of the same weight, both descending and falling at the same time on the water, and yet the Lead, or a Stone will sink; and the wood will swim?*

Ans. Tho Wood will not remain sunk in the water, but swim on the top thereof, because it is Aerial, and the place of Air is above the Water: The others will sink, because they are Terrestrial and Aquatick, but in the Air the wood will descend as swift as either. Because that the Air, as all other Elements, except fire, do weigh in their Natural place.

Quest. 9. *Why do a Bladder full of Wind, thrust by force under the Water, ascend suddenly again on the top thereof?*

Ans. Because the Air, or Wind where-with it is filled, doth return to its Natural place which is above the Water.

Quest. 10. *Why doth a Dog excell in smelling all other Creatures?*

Ans. 'Tis because in proportion to his Body, he hath the Nerve of that sense more large then any other Animal; But Man, on the contrary, hath it very little, by reason whereof he cannot smell so well.

Quest. 11. *Why do not Dogs scent so well in the Spring-time, as in other seasons of the Year? And why doth a Dog alone, of all other Animals remain attached to the Bitch after Copulation, being not easily to be separated?*

Ans. Alexander Aphroditius saith, that it is because the Birth hath the Passages of Nature very Straight, and the yard of the Dog swelling within by the ebullition of the Spirits, it is difficult after Copulation to withdraw it.

Quest. 12. *How comes it to pass, that those who sleep profoundly, (as most Labourers do) are seldom troubled with Dreams, or if they have Dreams they seldom remember them?*

Ans. The reason in one word is, that their senses are altogether benumbed.

Quest. 13. *Wherefore are not the Dreams that are made before we wake in the Morning, so Irregular, as those we have in our first sleep?*

Ans. 'Tis because that the Brain in the Morning, is not so loaden with the fumes of the Suppers Digestion.

Quest. 14. *Wherefore is it, that if we presently fall asleep after Meals, we Dream not suddenly after sleep hath Seized us?*

Ans. Because, that the too great quantity of fumes and vapours, that do then ascend from the Stomach to the Brain, doth hinder the Images of things to be represented to our Interior senses.

Quest. 15. *Wherefore do those things we Dream of, seem to us, much more great then Naturally they are?*

Ans. 'Tis because, the senses being lull'd asleep, being not able nicely to Judge of the Objects, have recourse to those things that are more gross, and more sensible of the same kind. And so a Man will seem a Giant, a thing indifferently hot will seem to Burn. A little sweet Flegm falling down the Throat, will seem Sugar, a small noise in our Ears, will seem to be Canons.

Quest. 16. *Wherefore are our Dreams in Autumn, more turbulent and confused, then those we have in other seasons of the Year?*

Ans. 'Tis because of the Eating of Fruits which are full of Humidity, which boyling in the Stomach, do send great quantity of fumes to the Head, which mingling with the Spirits, do produce strange and confused Illusions.

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